

# Falls Prevention Awareness Week Features Sept. 23 Screening for Newark Senior Center Members

DOVER (Sept. 20, 2019) – Falls among older adults are the leading cause for injury deaths and non-fatal injuries, including hip and brain injuries. The Delaware Coalition for Injury Prevention's Fall Prevention Team is hosting a falls prevention screening for members of the Newark Senior Center, 200 Whitechapel Drive, Newark, DE 19713, on Monday, September 23, from 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

To reduce their risk of falling, the Fall Prevention Team recommends that seniors access both online and community resources, such as taking A Matter of Balance, Tai Chi, gardening, or dance classes to build strength and flexibility through easy and effective exercises. Older adults can remain steady on their feet if they stay active and exercise regularly. They should discuss concerns about falls with their primary care provider and review medications with a doctor or pharmacist. Seniors should also have regular hearing and vision exams, and follow up on provider recommendations. Falls can further be prevented with adequate sleep and nutrition, and by removing fall hazards in living spaces.

To encourage Delawareans to support fall prevention strategies, Governor John Carney and Lieutenant Governor Bethany Hall-Long proclaimed the week of September 22-28, 2019 as Falls Prevention Awareness Week in Delaware. The National Council on Aging (NCOA) designates the first day of the fall season as National Falls Prevention Awareness Day, which is September 23 this year.

Communities can join this effort to reduce risk factors and support the overall health and the ability of all persons to live well and age in place. Municipalities, businesses, schools, and organizations can maintain walkways, paint curbs and slopes, install handrails, and provide ramps, automatic doors, and curb cuts to assist people of all ages avoid falls.

Falls are painful and can be disabling, leading to drastic life changes and costing an average of \$30,000 per fall injury in hospital expenses alone, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The number of seniors over 64 admitted to Delaware hospitals for treatment of fall injuries rose from 2,007 in 2013 to 2,264 in 2017, according to the Delaware Trauma System Registry.

The vision of the Delaware Coalition for Injury Prevention (DCIP) is a safe, injury-free Delaware. The Division of Public Health (DPH) Office of Emergency Medical Services staffs the DCIP, which includes volunteers, business owners, health care institutions, and state and local government agencies. For more information about the DCIP's Falls Prevention Team, or the falls prevention screening being held at Newark Senior Center, contact Diana Curtis at 302-744-6295 or [Diana\\_Curtis@bayhealth.org](mailto:Diana_Curtis@bayhealth.org).

More information about falls, injury prevention, and services and supports for older adults are available through these resources:

- DCIP: [dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/ems/injuryprevention/](https://dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/ems/injuryprevention/)
- Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities (DSAAPD): [dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dsaapd/](https://dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dsaapd/)
- Delaware Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC): Available 24/7 at 1-800-223-9074 or [DelawareADRC.com](https://DelawareADRC.com).
- CDC: [cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalafety/falls/](https://cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalafety/falls/)
- NCOA Center for Healthy Aging, National Falls Prevention Resource Center: <https://www.ncoa.org/center-for-healthy-aging/falls-resource-center/>

*A person who is deaf, hard-of-hearing, deaf-blind or speech-disabled can call the DPH phone number above by using TTY services. Dial 7-1-1 or 800-232-5460 to type your conversation to a relay operator, who reads your conversation to a hearing person at DPH. The relay operator types the hearing person's spoken words back to the TTY user. To learn more about TTY availability in Delaware, visit <http://delawarerelay.com>.*

*The Delaware Department of Health and Social Services is committed to improving the quality of the lives of Delaware's citizens by promoting health and well-being, fostering self-sufficiency, and protecting vulnerable populations. DPH, a division of DHSS, urges Delawareans to make healthier choices with the 5-2-1 Almost None campaign: eat 5 or more fruits and vegetables each day, have no more than 2 hours of recreational screen time each day (includes TV, computer, gaming), get 1 or more hours of physical activity each day, and drink almost no sugary beverages.*